

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims in this listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 22 (Canceled)

Claim 23 (Currently Amended) A sampling device comprising:

a male portion comprising a male base portion and a sample removal system ~~[[means]]~~, and

a female portion comprising a first female base portion and a sample container, the sample removal system ~~[[means]]~~ being removably located on the male base portion and the sample container being removably located at least in part within the first female base portion,

~~wherein as the male and female portions are brought together the sample removal~~ [[means]] system being adapted to collect ~~collects~~ a biological sample from an animal being tagged, ~~is received through the first as the male and female portions are brought together and in turn to be received within, and to seal the biological sample therein providing a sealed sample receiving space defined base portion, and lodges in the sample container, this action in turn introducing the sample to a sample receiving space within the sample container, pushing the sample container from the first female base portion, and sealing the sample receiving space, the sample removal means being system having provided therein~~ [[with]] an amount of sample preparative or preservative that is available to the biological sample within the sealed sample receiving space,

wherein the sample container is held with the first female base portion such that as the male and female portions are brought together the thereby sealed sample container is pushed from the female portion, and wherein further the male base portion the first

female base portion ~~whereby the male base portion and first female base portion~~ so brought together may not be separated without damage to the device.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 23 wherein the male base portion comprises a base and an upstanding member, the upstanding member having provided thereon an annular lip such that the lip prevents the male portion being pulled from the first female base portion once received therein.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 24 wherein the sample removal system ~~[[means]]~~ is adapted to be positively located on the upstanding member prior to the connection of the male and female portions.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 23 wherein the sample removal system ~~[[means]]~~ comprises a generally cylindrical cutter ~~[[means]]~~ and a thrust member, the cutter ~~[[means]]~~ having an open upper end provided with a cutting edge to facilitate penetration of animal tissue and the thrust member is received within a bore of the cutter ~~[[means]]~~ and has a seat member provided therein to seat an upstanding member provided on the male base portion.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 26 wherein the thrust member further defines therein a chamber adjacent the open upper end of the cutter ~~[[means]]~~ such that the biological sample obtained thereby presses into the chamber.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 27 wherein the sample preparative or preservative is provided in substantially granular form, the chamber having provided thereover a sheet of porous material so as to retain the preparative or preservative therein whilst allowing it to function with respect to the sample ultimately retained within the sample container.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 26 wherein the thrust member engages the cutter ~~[[means]]~~ within the bore thereof such that thrust imparted to the thrust member is passed to the cutter ~~[[means]]~~.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 26 wherein the cutter [[means]] is tapered from lower end to upper end, thereby facilitating its passage into the female portion of the sample device and its retention within the sample container.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 23 wherein the sample container is tapered such that it is broader at an open lower end thereof than it is at an upper end thereof, the lower end being received within the first female base portion before the male and female portions are brought together.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 23 wherein the first female base portion comprises a base member, in which is provided a frangible portion through which the male portion may be received and retained in part, and an upstanding collar, the upstanding collar is spaced radially apart from the aperture and is adapted to receive thereon a cap.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 32 wherein the open lower end of the sample container is releasably retained within the upstanding collar of the first female base portion by the cap, whereby the sample container is received through an aperture provided in the cap and as the sample removal system [[means]] is received in the open lower end of the sample container and pushed as the male and female portions are brought together, the sample container and sample removal system [[means]] detach from their respective portions leaving the remainder thereof positively engaged.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 32 wherein a ring of resilient material is captured within the upstanding collar and cap, the ring being of broader dimension than the aperture in the base member of the first female base portion and the aperture in the cap, whereby the ring is pushed upwardly by the annular lip of the upstanding member as the male and female portions are brought together, such that an attempt to tamper with the upstanding member should be visible.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 23 wherein the sampling device further comprises a transponder.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 35 wherein the transponder is provided as a separate member closely associated with the base member of the first female base portion, the transponder having provided therein an aperture to cooperate with the aperture provided in the first female base portion.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented) The sampling device of claim 36 wherein a second female base portion is provided to sandwich the transponder between it and the first female base portion, the second female base portion having an aperture provided therein to cooperate with the aperture of the transponder and the frangible portion of the first female base portion.

Claim 38 (Currently Amended) The sampling device claim 23 wherein both the male portion and female portion have a matching or otherwise coordinated identification device [[means]] provided thereon, the identification device [[means]] being configured such that it will be evident should an attempt be made to obscure, obliterate or remove the identification.

Claim 39 (Currently Amended) The sampling device of claim 38 wherein an identification device [[means]] is provided on each of the first female base portion, the sample container and the male base portion.

Claims 40 - 42 (Canceled)